

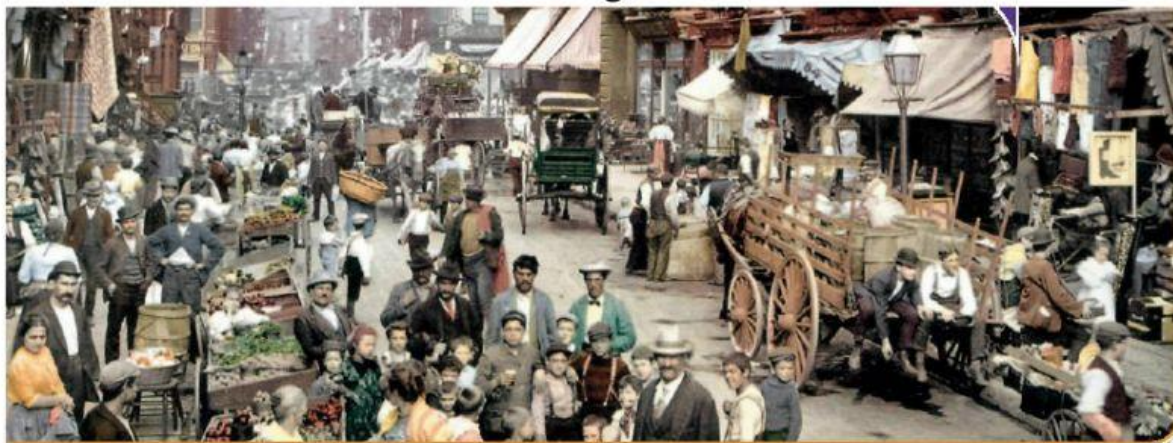


Extra training

Reading Task 032

Read the extract from a novel. For questions 1-8, choose the correct answer.

Discovering America



When I say that my first view of New York Bay struck me as something not of this Earth it is not a figure of speech. I vividly recall the feeling with which I greeted the first cat I saw on American soil. A large, black feline stood in a corner, eyeing the crowd of newcomers. The sight of it gave me a thrill. "Look!" I said to Gitelson, my newly acquired companion. And in my heart, I added, "Just like those at home!"

We were ferried over to Castle Garden, where the harsh manner of the immigration officers was a grievous surprise to me. As contrasted with the officials of my homeland, those of America had been portrayed in my mind as models of refinement. My anticipations were proven false. These unfriendly officials flavoured all of America with an icy inhospitality that sent a chill through my soul. However, we had no difficulty in being admitted to the United States. Many of the other immigrants were met by relatives, friends. There were cries of joy, tears, embraces, kisses. All of which intensified my sense of loneliness. Gitelson, who like myself had no friends in New York, never left my side. It seemed as though he were holding on to me for dear life.

"Cheer up!" I said joyfully. "America is no place to be a coward. Come; pull yourself together."

I led the way out of the station, across Battery Park and under the railway to State Street. The active life of the strange city made me feel like one abandoned in the midst of a jungle. But the presence of Gitelson encouraged me. I mustered the bravery to approach a policeman, something I would never have done at home.

However, my efforts to communicate were lost on him. With a grimace, he pointed in the direction of Broadway and strutted off majestically. At this moment a voice hailed us. Facing about, we saw a middle-aged man. Prosperity was written all over his face and body, but he was unmistakably one of our people. Still, his very diamonds somehow told a tale of former want, of a time when he had landed, an impoverished immigrant like myself; and this made him a living source of encouragement for me.

"You're a tailor, aren't you?" he asked, his eyes eagerly fixed on Gitelson. My companion nodded. "Well come along; I have work for you," he smiled. And then turning to me, "You have no trade, have you?" I shook my head. "Any relatives here? Well, don't worry. If a fellow isn't lazy, he has no reason to be sorry he came to America."

We continued our walk past Bowling Green, with the stranger and Gitelson absorbed in conversation. The trim-looking crowds of lower Broadway impressed me as a multitude of counts, barons, princes. I was puzzled by their preoccupied faces and hurried step, which seemed at odds with their general high-born appearance. When we finally reached the post office, the bejewelled man turned to me, "Walk straight ahead," he said, waving his hand toward Park Row. "It isn't far from here." With that, he slipped a silver quarter into my hand and made Gitelson bid me goodbye. The two then boarded a big red horse-car. I stood watching the receding vehicle with a sickening sense of abandonment. The grey hair of my timid companion haunted my brain as a hideous symbol of disloyalty. Then, with twenty-nine cents in my pocket, I set forth in the direction of East Broadway.

Adapted from *The Rise of David Levinsky* by Abraham Cahan

1. The word 'it' in the underlined sentence refers to _____.
 1. New York Bay
 2. his home
 3. a black cat
 4. the crowd
2. What impression did the writer have of American officials?
 1. They were lenient.
 2. They were strict.
 3. They were polite.
 4. They were rude.
3. How does the writer feel after being admitted to America?
 1. isolated
 2. excited
 3. emotional
 4. frightened
4. In paragraph 4, what effect did Gitelson have on the narrator?
 1. He made him laugh.
 2. He motivated him.
 3. He angered him.
 4. He worried him.
5. How does the writer describe the stranger?
 1. He was poor.
 2. He was a worthy employer.
 3. He was a friend.
 4. He was a successful immigrant.
6. According to the stranger what is necessary to succeed in America?
 1. An established family.
 2. A good work ethic.
 3. A skilled profession.
 4. A sympathetic nature.
7. What surprised the writer about the crowds?
 1. Their behaviour.
 2. Their aristocratic roots.
 3. Their fast pace.
 4. Their sheer numbers.
8. What was the writer's attitude towards Gitelson?
 1. He realised he was a coward.
 2. He became threatened by him.
 3. He felt betrayed by him.
 4. He had grown sick of him.